

Sadly the bad or those who want to do it their own way, and live by their own rules, establishing their own kingdom. There simply isn't any room in Jesus' kingdom for rebels, and a rebel will certainly meet only one end.

May we all seek to live as legal citizens of Jesus' kingdom, the kingdom of heaven, embracing the love of our king, being totally committed to him and his kingdom, joyfully building our relationship with him, living out his language of self-sacrificial love.

Long live the King!!!

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



Jesus' Disciples, who grow disciples, who grow disciples, who grow disciples...

24 July 2011

PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Over the last two weeks we've been looking at Jesus' parables on the Kingdom of Heaven. Today we look at three groups of parables that Jesus told regarding the Kingdom of Heaven.

The first two parables were: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, and like yeast." Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to two small items that grow in their influence.

Jesus points to the tiniest of seed, which once planted grows and becomes a blessing to those around it. Then Jesus points to yeast, which is only a small part in comparison with the rest of the dough, but it ends up influencing the whole loaf for good.

So the first point I get from Jesus is, don't look down on small things. Don't underestimate the

power of small beginnings. Start small and grow. This goes against my desire to have everything now. Jesus kingdom grows. Grows from the small, seemingly insignificant, and ends up being a blessing for those around.

And life is full of small events we might be tempted to over look. What are some small things you are tempted to over look? A polite word, manners. Thinking of other people's needs before my own.

A few weeks ago we were reminded of the importance of prayer. Prayer can seem a small thing, especially if we're looking for some big miracle to change the world. Jesus leads us to a quiet corner with himself, sharing our heart and soul with him, as he does with us. From

what might seem a small even insignificant event, God works in our lives.

Another good habit is to spend regular time reading the bible, as a means to hear and grow close to Jesus. Small, regular bits of time, allowing Jesus to show his love for me, to reveal his life purpose to me, building a strong relationship based on being open to each other. This small habit helps grow me and my relationship with Jesus.

The other thing is I meet with two other people. How can you change the world by only meeting with two other people, sharing heart to heart what Jesus has been saying? Maybe a petition with a million names on it would have more impact for good in our society.



Today Jesus reminds me not to underestimate the power of small beginnings. Just imagine what might happen if those small groups of people, allowing Jesus to lead and shape them began to multiply.

Which is how seeds grow.

One group of three could become two, then four, then eight, then sixteen, then thirty-two, then sixty-four. Sixty-four groups of three or four people encouraging each other personally, together listening and sharing life with Jesus.

Today Jesus reminds me that the kingdom begins small and grows through multiplication, as people share their relationship with Jesus with each other. And before you know it, Jesus' and his love could be the agenda of our nation.

The second set of parables were; "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who found a treasure, who found a

pearl and then they sold everything to get it." Jesus' kingdom is all or nothing. Jesus isn't interested in a half-heated love toward us. Jesus has taken the risk of investing himself totally in us.

This is one of the characteristics of Jesus' kingdom, it is built on total commitment.

What small things do you overlook?

There's no hedging your bets, it's all or nothing.

What would it take for you to come home after a walk in the bush and sell everything you have to buy a piece of land. Selling everything is extremely radical. I'd sell some and keep some, just in case it doesn't work out.

I wonder if we are ever tempted to do that in any of our relationships. Not putting in everything but having a built in safety strategy. With Jesus,

he's put it all on the line for you. Total commitment, with nothing being held back, because that's the sort of relationship he is after.

Where do we find it hard to commit, totally?

The Old Testament is a story of a God who's totally committed and a people who aren't so

sure. What is stopping them from trusting, from being totally committed; they look around and wonder if they might miss-out.

They believe that diversifying your assets is a safer way.

But with Jesus you can't have a little of this, most of that, none of that.

With Jesus it's the whole of him, warts and all. Because Jesus has sold everything to purchase you, to buy you back from slavery. When

Jesus died on the cross it was all of him, for death is something that takes the lot. Jesus gave his all for you, that you might now trust him with your life, all of it, in sickness

and in health, for richer or poorer, for better or worse.

With Jesus we find the joy of a 100% committed relationship. Jesus 100% committed to me so that I can place all of my life in his hands, living life his way, making decisions based on his values and outcomes.

I move from living outside of God's love. A stranger to him, into living inside God's love in Christ Jesus. It's like moving from one country to the other. You can't leave part of you in one country and another in the new country. Especially if you are a citizen of your new country, you cease to be a citizen of your old country and now are a citizen of your new country.

To the point where you will take up arms against your old country if you are to go to war. Which is the history of many of our ancestors. They left Germany only to find

their sons and grandsons at war with Germany, fighting as loyal Australians. What is one of the worst crimes in war; to be disloyal, to side with the enemy, to sell out your mates?

There is no room for traitors.

Jesus finishes with a fishing parable. The kingdom of heaven is

Jesus is 100% Committed to You.

like a huge catch of fish, where some are good and some are bad. And the outcome for the bad is very bad. And the outcome for the good is extremely good. Jesus doesn't want us to be under any illusions. This talk about his kingdom isn't meaningless waffle, the stakes are high, like it or not.

And encase you haven't noticed Jesus' kingdom isn't a democracy, where he's always looking at the latest opinion poll to keep you on side. No,

Jesus is the King, like it or not, and he will act as King for he has the power and authority to do his will, which is always in harmony with his Father's will.

So we mightn't like what we hear; judgement.

Surely we need to be tolerant, accepting other people, celebrating our differences. To which

Jesus says; I'll be the judge of that, not you.

So who are the good fish? Simple, those who have been

living with Jesus in a committed relationship, based on his grace and mercy. Those who have been talking with him, listening to him, sharing their hopes and dreams with him, listening to his hopes and dreams, and then together walking into the future Jesus has planned. In other words those who are now living in Jesus' kingdom, living with him as their king, trusting him 100% with their life, with their life choices, living life his way, speaking his language of love.